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MADHYA PRADESH REPORTS 23 TIGER DEATHS IN FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 2024

Of the 75 deaths reported from 12 states since the start of the year, 23 have been in Madhya Pradesh, National Tiger Conservation Authority data said

INFIGHTING AMONG TOP CAUSES OF DEATHS

At least 10 of the 23 tiger deaths were reported in the state's Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve (BTR). A probe into tiger deaths by a three-member committee constituted by the Madhya Pradesh forest department found that at least 17 big cat deaths in BTR in the last three years were due to territorial fights. Two-three deaths were blamed on poaching and the rest on old age

DOUBLE-DIGIT DEATHS IN MAHA, K'TAKA ALSO

- After Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra reported the maximum number of tiger deaths at 14, and Karnataka followed with 11 deaths this year
- During the entire 2023, there were 43 tiger deaths in Madhya Pradesh (181 deaths across India). The state with the highest tiger population in India, accounted for one-fourth of tiger deaths reported in the last three years

785

TOTAL TIGER POPULATION IN MADHYA PRADESH AS PER 2022 TIGER CENSUS

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

SC postpones NEET-UG hearing to July 18

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Thursday deferred its hearing on a batch of pleas seeking cancellation of NEET-UG, as the bench said some of the parties haven't received the affidavits filed by the Centre and the National Testing Agency (NTA), which conducts the test.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, however, said they have served their affidavit to the counsel for the parties.

A three-judge bench led by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud postponed the hearing to July 18 to allow the petitioners to file their responses to the government and the NTA's affidavits.

Initially, the court suggested that it be deferred by a day or till Monday, but Mehta said he had a personal difficulty on that day. The bench also said it has received a status report from the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on the progress made in the probe into alleged irregularities in the conduct of NEET-UG 2024.

In its affidavit on Wednesday, the Centre said data analytics of the results of NEET-UG conducted by IIT Madras found there was neither any indication of mass malpractice nor a localised set of candidates benefiting from it and scoring abnormally high marks.

While hearing the pleas on July 8, the bench had observed that the exam's sanctity had been breached.

Another key operative in paper leak arrested

The CBI on Thursday arrested one of the alleged kingpins in the NEET-UG paper leak. Rockey alias Rakesh Ranjan, who hails from Bihar's Nalanda, and is said to be a relative of mastermind Sanjeev Mukhia, was nabbed from the outskirts of Patna. It produced him before a special court in Patna, which remanded him in 10 days of CBI custody.

WITH THIS ISSUE
CITY'S BEST WEEKEND GUIDE
INDULGE
40 PAGES, INCLUDING 24 OF INDULGE (TABLOID)

CONTINENTAL CONQUESTS: FAMILIAR FOES TO THE FORE

Spain stand between England and a first ever Euro title. On the other side of the Atlantic, Messi can win a third major international title in four years. A look...

SPAIN VS ENGLAND FOR EUROPEAN GLORY

Spain have the chance to add a fourth European crown and will begin the final as favourites. They have sparkled in Germany but they will be wary of England who are now into a second consecutive final. They have found different ways to win as was the case against Netherlands on Wednesday

England's Harry Kane (up) celebrates with his teammate Ollie Watkins | AFP

Chance for Messi to make more history against Colombia

After Lionel Messi unretired, he has led Argentina to major titles including the last World Cup in 2022. However, Colombia, who beat Uruguay in a typically feisty clash, have one of the longest unbeaten streaks in football, having now gone 28 matches without defeat

WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS
England 2-1 Netherlands, Colombia 1-0 Uruguay
SUNDAY'S FINALS: England vs Spain, Colombia vs Argentina

Guarantees a burden, no money for devpt works, says CM's Fin advisor

SUBHASH CHANDRA NS @ Yalburga (Koppal)

BASAVARAJ Rayareddy, financial advisor to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, on Thursday kicked up a storm stating that there is no money for development works in the state because of the guarantee schemes.

Participating in a farmers' meeting after launching work on a lake at Mangaluru village in Yalburga taluk, he said the guarantee schemes have affected the state's growth.

"Many legislators are demanding funds to take up development works in their constituencies, but there is no money with the government. We are spending around Rs 65,000 crore on the guarantee schemes. Since I am the financial advisor, I somehow manage to get grants," he said.

The guarantees have become a burden on the government. "People want development. But believe me, there is absolutely no money. Since I am the financial advisor, I managed to get funds for the lake development project here," he said.

Meanwhile, DyCM DK Shivakumar said the government is not facing any financial problem due to the guarantee schemes.

"Guarantee schemes are not draining any resources and we will continue them," he said, replying to Rayareddy's statement. "We have not introduced the guarantees for votes, they are meant to improve the lives of people, who have been badly affected by price rise," he said.

Farmers to revive protest ahead of Assembly polls

Mahapanchayats to be held in Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir

JITENDRA CHOUBEY & HARPREET BAJWA @ New Delhi / Chandigarh

WITH the upcoming Assembly elections in sight, farmers' body Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) on Thursday announced its plan to resume protests over its pending demands, including a legal guarantee to MSP and loan waiver. Leaders of the SKM, an umbrella body of farm unions that led the 2020-21 protest, said they will seek appointments to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi to submit their list of demands. They will also meet all MPs of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha to urge them to put pressure on the government to accept their demands. The appointments will be sought between July 16 and 18, they added.

SKM leaders said the decision to revive protests was taken at the general body meeting held in Delhi on Wednesday, adding that this time there might not be a march to Delhi. Rather, the protests will be concentrated in election-bound states of Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Haryana and J&K. Mahapanchayats will be held in these states, sources said.

Senior SKM leader and president of All India Kisan Federation Prem Singh Bhangu said the protest is to pressure the government to implement the agreement between the SKM and the Centre, signed on December 9, 2021. Apart from MSP, the demands include withdrawal of all cases related to the farmers' agitation, disbursal of compensation for those who died during the protest, protection from criminal liability for stubble burning, etc.

In the meeting, the SKM leaders congratulated farmers for "teaching the BJP a lesson" in the Lok Sabha elections.

Protest in front of Mann's house

On August 17, the SKM's Punjab unit will hold 3-hour protests in front of the residences of CM Bhagwant Mann and his ministers over water crisis, debt burden, opening the Indo-Pak trade through road corridors, etc

94% of agri crops out of MSP net: SBI

BENN KOCHUVEEDAN @ Mumbai

WHILE the farmer unions are demanding legal backing for minimum support price (MSP), a new report by the research team of SBI says the MSP regime currently covers just 6% of the agriculture basket, mostly food grains. The government spent ₹3.4 lakh crore on MSP in FY23 and if it decides to procure all MSP crops, then it will leave a fiscal burden of a whopping ₹13.5 lakh crore, the report said.

Foodgrains, it said, is only 17% of the overall output of the agri sector, while other segments such as livestock, vegetables and fruits, representing a combined 71% of the output, get inadequate support. However, "the politics of MSP fails to address the concerns of 71% in a more holistic manner as even after best efforts, the government is able to procure 6% of overall output as MSP," Ghosh says in the report.

EXPRESS READ

Maha govt tables Bill to counter 'Urban Naxals'

Mumbai: The Maharashtra government on Thursday tabled a bill in the assembly aimed at preventing unlawful activities of individuals and organisations. The bill is seen to curb the menace of Naxalism and its sympathisers in urban areas | P9

Lokayukta police raid 11 officials across K'taka

Bengaluru: The Lokayukta police on Thursday unearthed disproportionate assets worth Rs 45.14 crore during raids on 11 officials in 56 locations in the state. This excludes bank lockers and household valuables, which are still under investigation | P5

K'taka told to release 1 tmcft of water per day to TN till July 31

JITENDRA CHOUBEY @ New Delhi

THE Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC) on Thursday directed Karnataka to release one tmcft of water per day to Tamil Nadu from July 12 till 31.

The committee, however, rejected Karnataka's plea to wait till July end before arriving at any decision on releasing water.

In the current water year (2024-25), the backlog water flow is around 14 tmcft against the total stipulated flow of 18 tmcft. Karnataka has so far released only 4 tmcft, citing inadequate inflow into its reservoirs due to poor monsoon, it stated.

Due to deficient rain in June, Karnataka was able to release only 1.7 tmcft against the stipulated 9.19 tmcft. Further, between July 1 and July 9, Karnataka released 2.24 tmcft against 9 tmcft fixed for the period.

In July, Karnataka should ensure cumulative realisation of 31.24 tmcft, i.e. 1 tmcft per day for July, in a normal year, as per the final award of the CWDT as modified by the Supreme Court.

"We have directed Karnataka to release 1 tmcft of water per day to reduce the backlog," Vineet Gupta, Chairman of CWRC, told TNIE after the committee meet in Delhi.

"We found that water in Mettur reservoir is just 16% of its storage level whereas in Karnataka, it is 58% full. Hence, Karnataka can easily manage water flow to Mettur. Otherwise, the backlog will keep increasing," Gupta said.

No water in our dams, says DKS

Bengaluru: Deputy Chief Minister and Water Resources Minister DK Shivakumar said on Thursday that Karnataka does not have sufficient water in its reservoirs to release for Tamil Nadu | P4

DU V-C nixes proposal to add Manusmriti readings in LLB

IFRAH MUFTI @ New Delhi

A proposal to introduce readings of the *Manusmriti* in Delhi University's LLB programme on jurisprudence, was nixed by Vice-Chancellor Yogesh Singh on Thursday. The proposal had drawn a firestorm of protests as it was to be discussed at the University's academic council meet on Friday.

"Today a proposal by the Faculty of Law was submitted to the Delhi University. In the proposal, they had suggested changes in the paper titled Jurisprudence. One of the changes was to include readings on *Manusmriti*. We have rejected both the suggested readings and the amendments proposed by the Faculty. Nothing of this sort will be taught to students," said Singh in a video message.

The proposal had been unanimously approved in a June 24 meeting of the Faculty of Law's Course Committee headed by its dean Anju Vali Tikoo, according to its minutes. Tikko was not available for comments.

DRDO picks B'luru firm to develop NavIC chip

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

THE Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has commissioned a Bengaluru-based firm to indigenously develop a receiver chip to acquire and disseminate Indian time for Navigation using the Indian Constellation (NavIC) developed by ISRO.

The IRNSS satellites, through NavIC, aim at providing directional mapping support to land, rail and air-based users to find routes to destinations easier. Presently, the service is largely dependent on the Global Positioning System (GPS) provided by the US constellation of navigation satellites.

DRDO and ISRO sources said while ISRO has already developed IRNSS satellites and is working towards making NavIC available to the common man, DRDO is indigenously developing a receiver chip and will give IRNSS Network Timing (IRNWT) time for dissemination.

DRDO has commissioned Bengaluru-based Accord Software and Systems Pvt Ltd (ASSPL), which will develop a customised and flexible timing system as per range requirements for NavIC. Sources in ASSPL said, "We are developing a completely Indian-made receiver for defence and commercial applications. The need for this arose after the experience during the Kargil war where India's request to the US for use of Global Positioning System (GPS) technology for information of the area was denied. We are now depending on GPS technology even on our mobile phones."

The latest development will also significantly help the defence sector. "Work is on to shift Indian-based receivers, where the sector will have complete control. It is a 24-month project that began on July 1," ASSPL sources said. P10

While ISRO has developed IRNSS satellites and is working towards making NavIC available to the common man, DRDO is indigenously developing a receiver chip and will give IRNSS Network Timing time for dissemination

DRDO and ISRO officials